

MOREHEAD TOLD TO LIMIT PROGRAMS MOREHEAD STATE SHOULD CUT PROGRAMS, NEW STUDY SAYS



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Morehead State University, "facing greater trials than any of recent years," should drastically scale down its athletic program, drop most of its master's degree offerings and set enrollment limits, according to a consultant's study of the college.

A.D. Albright, former president of Northern Kentucky University, said in a report commissioned by Morehead that the school must make substantial changes to cope with such problems as loss of enrollment, reduction in state General Fund appropriations, less money to spend and possible loss of program quality. Albright, 70, also served as executive director of the state Council on Higher Education and was a University of Kentucky administrator.

The Albright report is one two reports -the other being that of Morehead President Morris Norfleet -- that are under study by college administrators and regents.

Morehead State University is in the Rowan County city of Morehead.

Among the possible solutions, according to Albright:

* Revamping the athletics program. "More general funds are currently expended (on sports) than can be justified at any time, much less in years of stringency," the report says. "For example, football is terribly expensive and produces little revenue."

While the report suggests phasing down the football program -- now in Division I-AA and standing at 0-6 for the season -- to National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II or III over the next four years, it adds, "The decision needs to be made now."

Norfleet's report said that the school is now "studying alternate ways to approach the ever-nagging problem of athletic costs."

* Having just five or six master's degree programs, instead of the present 22. Programs needing special scrutiny, the report says, are "those with low enrollments, high costs, little service to other programs or

exceptional support requirements."

Norfleet's report says the college is now reviewing all baccalaureate and master's programs "for possible elimination, consolidation and strengthening."

- * Setting an enrollment limit at 5,500 head count (meaning full- and part- time students -- full-time equivalent would be 4,000), excluding a proposed new community-collegetype program. That program would provide access to liberal arts, technical preparation and catch-up skills for area high school graduates after the beginning of selective admissions.

The Albright report says that setting target enrollments "is one measure for maintaining an acceptable quality level; to do otherwise waters down the level."

"Selective admissions, already enacted, will force such an enrollment target within a few years, and it is better for the University to decide now what needs to be done," the report says.

Morehead's enrollment is 6,500. And while the proposed limits may appear to be a cut, Morehead regent Mike Duncan of Inez noted that the number of traditional college-age students -- those who are recent high school graduates -- is expected to decline. "We're just getting the reality that there are going to be fewer students out there," Duncan said.

- * Reducing the number of vice presidents from four to two or possibly three, to include one in academic affairs and one for administrative services.

- * Creating special experimental units in areas such as scientific technology or fine arts. In addition, the report recommends consolidating the existing six schools in the university into two colleges -- one concentrating in arts and sciences and the other in professional studies.

Norfleet's report also said the reduction of the number of schools and departments should be a goal.

- * Developing a policy for dealing with continued budget cuts before they occur. Norfleet's report says that the college will set aside \$450,000 of its recurring operating budget for a possible future budget cut.

"In the sixties and early seventies, Morehead, as many institutions, grew phenomenally in students, faculty, staff, facilities, programs and funding," the Albright report says. "Then, five or six years ago, circumstances generally began to change: budget cuts came, enrollment subsided, funding from all sources withered, curtailments became necessary."

- * Appointing new faculty members on term contracts of a limited number of years in order to respond better to economic downturns.

- * Hiring an executive or administrative assistant to the president "to gain some relief from a myriad of small

items and lesser matters."

Earlier this week Norfleet appointed an eight-member task force of administrators and faculty and staff members to study the Albright report and other suggestions for improving the university. Albright suggested that proposals that are undertaken should be completed within the next nine months at the most.

Albright's report, presented to the school's board of regents last month, says that the university's part-time enrollment dropped by 1,167 between 1978 and 1982, while graduate enrollment fell by 1,065 during the same period and the total head count dropped 557 between 1975 and 1982. That signals a decline in tuition revenues and housing revenues, according to the report.

Coupled with a possible reduction in the state's general fund appropriation, the report says, the college may have to trim its expenditures by nearly \$1 million.

"With reduced resources, the quality of the University's teaching and service programs is likely to suffer severely -- at a time when greater quality is being expected and demanded by students, taxpayers and the general public," the report says.

Indeed, Morehead, with its 6,500 students, is among the smaller of the state's public institutions. In size, it is surpassed by Murray State University's 7,600 students and is only larger than Kentucky State University, which has 2,431 students.